# TOWN & COUNTRY CHURCH

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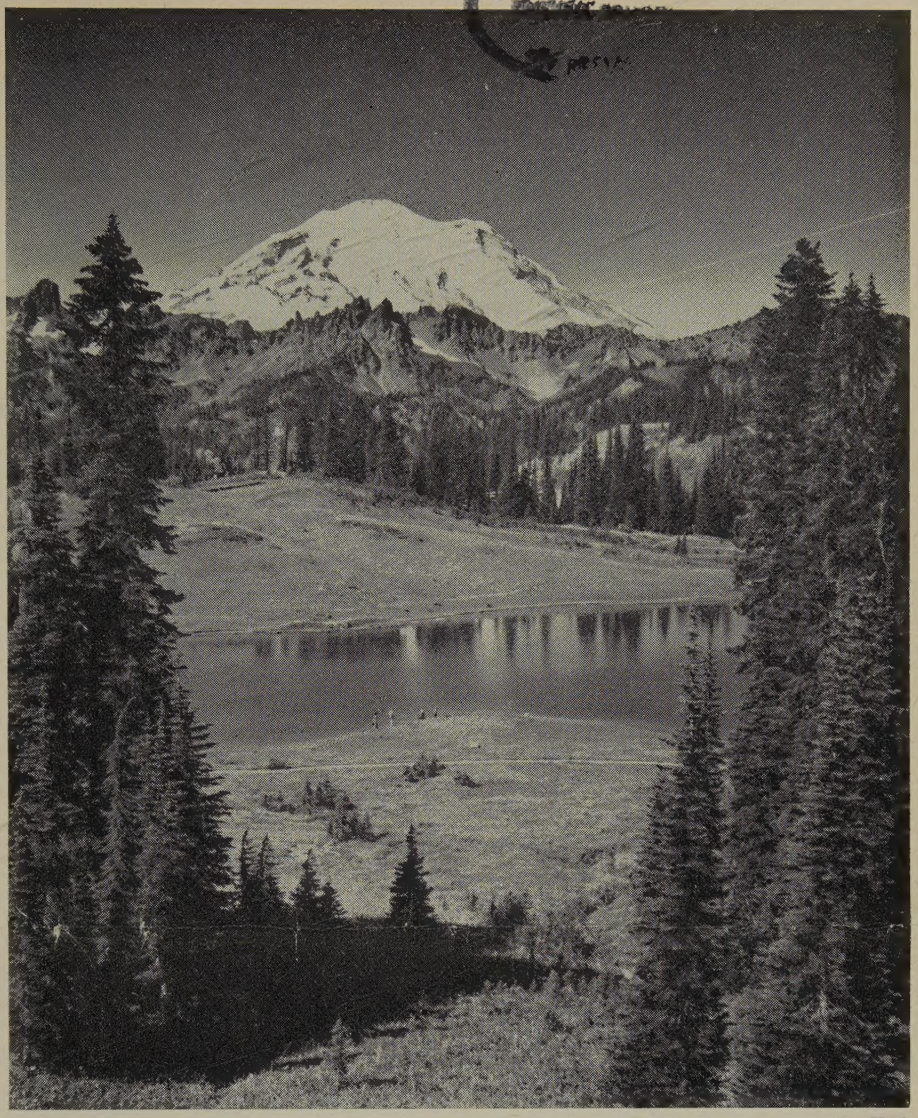

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*May, 1960*

*Advance Announcement*

## NATIONAL CONVOCATION ON THE CHURCH IN TOWN AND COUNTRY

***October 18-19, 1960 Denver, Colorado***

Brochures with registration blanks will be mailed soon to all subscribers of TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH. For additional registration blanks write:

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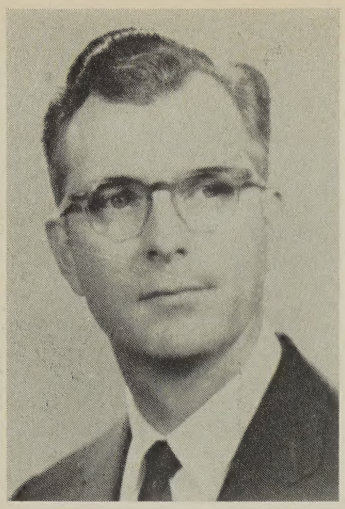

## DALE W. MEDEARIS

• Dale W. Medearis is associate executive secretary of the Department of Church Development for The United Christian Missionary Society, the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) international board of Christian education and missions.

Among other things, Mr. Medearis has responsibility for developing program for town and country churches (in communities of 2,500 population or less). In this capacity Mr. Medearis helps to develop congregations in small towns and open country where 65 per cent of the churches of Disciples of Christ in America are located.

In 1955 Mr. Medearis completed two basic research projects on Disciples of Christ which have made data available to churches and church agencies. The results of this research are published in detail in special reports and in summary form in "Facts About Our Churches and a Changing America" by Medearis and Rector.

Since joining the United Society in 1950, Mr. Medearis has participated in many local, regional, national and world conferences on rural life and associated concerns and serves as chairman of the Department of Town and Country Church of the National Council of Churches.

For the Disciples of Christ, Mr. Medearis is also secretary of the Committee on Town and Country Church of the Home and State Missions Planning Council. In this capacity, he has given leadership in programs and strategies for town and country churches of the Disciples of Christ.

Mr. Medearis was born and reared on a farm in Woodson County, Kansas, receiving his ministerial training at Phillips University, Enid, Oklahoma, and Texas Christian University, Fort Worth. He was serving a pastorate at Waycross, Georgia, when called to general work in 1950.

The United Society, with which Mr. Medearis serves, is a board which administers Christian education and world missions and provides many services to churches. Its ministries are carried on by voluntary cooperation among Christian Churches (Disciples). From offices in Indianapolis, Indiana, this board serves the majority of the 8,000 Disciples of Christ churches throughout North America and their missions in the United States and eleven other countries.

# Summertime Is Here Again

DR. RICHARD O. COMFORT

• Those delightful summer months are here again. Some churches will be having daily vacation church schools. Others will be busy preparing their members to go to camps, work camps, and conferences. Still others will close their doors for the summer, or for at least a part of it. Their members will find themselves traveling all over the U.S.A. and into other countries, some on business and others on vacation. Those on vacation will be seeking a change of scenery, some of them attempting to get away from people, and perhaps away from God.

For various churches this is *the* busy season. Visitors, summer residents, tourists and vacationers will swell the congregation as the Sundays pass, one by one. Many churches are using new and creative ways of meeting the needs of people during the good old summertime.

It is the purpose of this issue to share with you some of the ways the churches are serving people during the warm months of the year. Space permits us to mention only a few of the many ways the churches are challenging people, young and old, to use their summer hours in significant ways.

New insights, a broader vision, different friends, and a deeper understanding of, and dedication to, the Christian way of life are often the results of a summer well spent in one of the ways described in this May issue of TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH.

It is often said that "you can almost see the corn grow" in the Middle West, during the long, hot days in the early summer. You can see young people grow in the Christian faith as they attend a conference or a work camp. In their travels they come to know those whose lives reflect their dedication and joy. They discover that people are personalities, regardless of their race or creed. In helping others they often find themselves and God.

### Coming Events

The Pennsylvania Council of Churches, in cooperation with the Pennsylvania State University, will hold a "Conference on Church and Community" at the Nittany Lion Inn, University Park, Pennsylvania, from July 5-8, 1960. The purpose of the conference is to provide specialized social service information of value to the Church and its ministry; i.e., to make the best use of the resources available at the University. These meetings are unique in that they bring both city and country pastors together for a consideration of problems common to both areas.

# Vacation Time — A Challenge to the Church

GLADYS B. QUIST

### *A New Experience*

• Slowly the children entered the white frame community building that stood in the midst of the prairie. A half-mile distant, nestled in a grove of trees, stood the small chapel that was their church. The adults of that church had arranged for this new thing which was happening. A Vacation Church School was to take place. A visiting team of two seminarians and two local leaders was greeting the children with whom they would live and work for the next two weeks.

These boys and girls were to have their first experience with a Vacation Church School. Summer for them usually meant a few weeks in which they enjoyed release from a long winter of regular study. These were followed by long, tedious days in which there seemed to be nothing to do. To be sure, each helped with the farm work to the extent of his ability. But that never filled the great spaces of time, nor provided the food for the creative imaginations and capacities for thought and growth that these children possessed. This first warm summer day brought twenty-three of them, ages six to fourteen, to the school. Some of them had walked three miles. Was it worth the effort? What was going to happen? Would they like it?

Two weeks later after thirty hours of Vacation Church School, plus many out-of-school contacts, the boys and girls and local leaders were saying goodbye to their seminarians. These had been busy weeks of planning, studying, playing, worshipping and living together. "Please stay, why can't we have two more weeks?" "This is the most fun I've ever had." "Will we have another school next year?" These and other remarks gave testimony to what had been happening to one community's children in a brief period of time.

### *Use the Summer*

Summer provides a vast reservoir of free time which the church is just beginning to tap in her attempt to reach children and meet their continuing need for further experience and growth in the Christian faith.

The boys and girls in the above experience would have willingly continued in their school for two more weeks; they had the time. The children of our nation have from eight to sixteen weeks of vacation time each summer. Too often the church focuses its religious training programs in the months of the regular school year where it competes with the secular school program and with such organized groups as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and others. Social and industrial changes in our society have so altered life in the summertime that children have less to do in terms of home employment, even in our rural areas.

Many churches follow the pattern of educational institutions insofar as children's programs are concerned. Sunday schools close for the summer, choir groups disband, and weekday released time classes no longer meet. Yet repeatedly church leaders say, "There is never enough time for us to teach." Yes, true, in today's struggle to win the hearts and minds of children, competition is great and time is of the essence. The last week in March, 1960 brought over 7,500 leaders of our nation to "the Golden Anniversary White House Conference on Children and Youth." Here these leaders grappled with the necessity for instilling in our children and youth the spiritual and moral values needed to cope with a changing world. We, who are leaders of the Church's children, sense the great responsibility which this places on us. Insofar as the time element is concerned, the summer months represent for us

Photo by Devaney, Inc. New York

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## Town & Country Church

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Contributors of articles to TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH speak for themselves and not for the National Council of Churches or sponsoring organizations.


### Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

### Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

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an immediate opportunity to reach out not only to the children already within the fellowship but also to some of the thirty million unchurched children and youth of our nation.

*Your Community*

Perhaps your community is one of those where the church is not using the summer to carry out aspects of its Christian education program. Or perhaps you need to find new ways. Stop and look at your community. Especially study the church in your community and ask yourself, "What are we doing to try to reach all of our children so that they may grow spiritually, morally, physically, emotionally and mentally?" If you will truly look with eyes that see, and listen with ears that hear, you may understand more fully what is happening to the boys and girls about you.

Perhaps they are saying: "I wish there was something for me to do." "Me? I'm a migrant. I wish we'd hurry and finish the asparagus. Then we'd move to the beans. Maybe afterward we might go back home." "I wish I could see Johnny. I haven't seen him for months." (School was out just two weeks ago.) Here are some of the deep needs of children being expressed in simple words.

What the first child is saying means, perhaps: "I need to achieve something. I need to be challenged with significant things on my own level, to use my own talents, to undertake new tasks."

Maybe that migrant child is one of many in your community who feels: "I'm nobody, nobody wants me here, nobody cares."

The expression of the need for Johnny probably means: "I want to share with someone who feels and thinks as I do, who is my age. I need Johnny, we belong together."

The church fellowship must try to bring the message of the gospel to children in such ways that their deep needs will be answered by it. Through its programs for children, the Church can help to give children a sense of achievement as it helps to guide them to worthy ambitions and provides a chance for each child to give his best with others in Christian community. Through programs which provide for loving relationships, through small groups, children can be helped to self-respect and belonging. Friendships can be the basis of a growing relatedness to the Christian community. If we care enough about the children, we will reach out and build programs which give them security in the Christian community so that they may experience believing. Summer programs can provide the time needed to reach deeply into the lives of children so that they may more fully grow "in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man."

*The Nature of Summer Programs*

The living patterns of most communities change in the summer. During this season there is no school, with its related extra-curricular activities, nor are there the regular organized community programs, such as scouting. The winter months thus have crowded days for most youngsters, while the summertime is more leisurely, and parents take over more of the family supervision. These facts must be considered when planning for the summer. What is devised for these months must of necessity supplement rather than duplicate the winter's program, if the full benefits of these days are to be derived.

Plans may be more informal and relaxed. Time and continuity of programs will permit leaders to capitalize on the needs and interests of children. There is more opportunity to live together within our organized Vacation Church Schools, day camps, resident camps, work groups than in the brief period of a Sunday morning class hour.

A two-week Vacation Church School, for example, provides almost as much teaching time as most Sunday schools furnish in a whole year. A two-week resident camp affords an even greater opportunity for the establishment of Christian relationships between leaders and children. Here children can feel a sense of belonging, know the meaning of achievement and catch the joy and security of believing and living in Christian community.

### *Community Planning*

Each community needs to plan in terms of its own particular situation. A good summer program will not create confusion or conflict for the community's children.

The church in the small or rural community has many real advantages. It is often already the center of community living. The problems, needs and interests of its boys and girls are already evident to it. Families and community groups are closely allied in carrying out community projects. The setting, God's great out-of-doors, is one of the Christian teacher's great resources. Children already know each other and their leaders, so the various age groups can readily work together. Each community needs to ask itself some basic questions as it plans.

*Consider your community*:

1. *What is happening in it this summer?*

You will need to know how involved children are in home employment on the farms, if your community is a rural one. You will need to be aware of the ongoing organized community programs. The total period of vacation or free time which boys and girls have on their hands will be another factor in your planning. If they have eight weeks, to plan for only two weeks may be to fail them.

2. *How can you, in your community, work more fully together for the children?*

If yours is more than a one-church community, you will wish to cooperate with others both in planning and carrying out courses of action. This will enable you to pool leadership, to do better training of lay leadership, to use facilities more adequately, and to show your boys and girls a united concern on the part of the Christian church for their welfare.

There may also be other community organizations ready to work with you. Perhaps you, too, will need to use the community hall. A community plan to coordinate activities may be needed in your area; leadership might be exchanged and mutual plans for financing programs be worked out. Systematic planning by churches and other agencies is essential to an effective program for children and youth within any community.

3. *What kinds of summer programs should you establish?*

What are the needs of your children? What has been the winter educational program in your churches and how can you best implement the lacks in that program? Perhaps your community needs a Vacation Church School. Over eight million church children were involved in these last summer. Perhaps a resident camp, day camp, recreational group, care center or school for migrant children, story hour, or arts and craft program may answer your community's need. All of these are established type programs. You may wish to move into less common areas and experiment with family programs and other special projects. Whatever program you plan, you will want it to minister to the needs of your boys and girls so that they may find Christian answers to their questions about life, guidance for their actions, and an aroused appreciation and deepened understanding of the Christian faith and its values.

4. *Where will you get your leadership and how will you train them?*

Church programs do require trained leadership, and this involves a costly expenditure of time, energy, and money—both by individual leaders and the community as a whole. But the task of instilling Christian values necessitates leaders who are ready to pay that cost, and leaders who care. Parents, particularly mothers, provide one source of summertime leadership; college students another. A third, that we have already mentioned, is previously trained community leaders. Each year denominations and councils of churches sponsor leadership training schools, both on local and area levels. One by-product of training summertime leaders has been to provide more and better leadership for church winter programs.

These are just four of the basic questions you will discover as you begin your planning. Below you will find mentioned some books and pamphlets to help you as you plan.

### *Descriptions of Summer Programs*

Some summer church programs are already well established in the educational life of the church. To be effective, these programs must always be growing and changing to meet the needs of the boys' and girls' daily lives. New ways must be found to reach children already in the fellowship, but the church also faces the continual challenge of reaching unchurched boys and girls.

Here are brief descriptions of some summer programs which have already proven themselves.

### *The Vacation Church School*

The Vacation Church Schools have been a part of the Christian Education program for over half a century. They began in an attempt to reach the idle children on city streets. The success of the movement is attested to by the fact that in 1949 at least four million children were enrolled in these schools and in the next ten years the number more than doubled. In this movement we have found and developed an idea which has meaning and reality as an integral part of the whole educational program.

A Vacation Church School is what its name implies—a school and a vacation with religious significance. In its beginnings, and still today, it is an ecumenical experience. Usually it is a result of the cooperative effort of councils of churches or local church groups. Although some denominations produce curriculum materials for use in these schools, the vast majority use the Cooperative Series produced through the National Council of Churches.

The wide acceptance of this movement has brought a corresponding cooperative effort to train leadership. Those who wish to avail themselves of this may get information from council and denominational offices about what has been done in their area. Another mark of the movement is that it adapts itself well to the needs of a community in which it finds itself. For example, it can continue for as many weeks as time

(*Continued on Page* 14)

# Summer Service — Youth Work

ADAH M. ARMSTRONG

• Are today's young people cynical about the church?

Students who labored in Presbyterian Work Camps last summer soon lost their cynicism — if they had any.

Dozens of college and university students left behind their studies, their books, their social life and their campuses in all sections of the country to see for themselves the frontier work of the Board of National Missions of the United Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.

They were jolted —and thrilled —by their first encounter with a rough and tough life, so very different from their comfortable urban backgrounds and academically-centered lives. With the jolts and discipline of hard physical labor came unexpected spiritual uplift.

"For the first time in my life I was working and living beyond what had been mere academic beliefs. I had to rely on my personal, day-by-day experience with God," said one coed.

"We got a completely new concept of evangelism and what it means to work on the mission field," another student reported.

Most of the students paid their own expenses from such far-away places as New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Ohio to Alaska. Those going to Alaska from Kansas, South Dakota and Oregon had it a little easier, but they still had to pay room and board when they arrived. For students really short of funds the Board of National Missions did provide travel subsidy (very limited). In other cases, if it seemed as though this fellow or that girl couldn't go, their own home churches helped them out.

Fifteen young men and women who went to Alaska to teach Vacation Church School in Thinglet Indian villages got more than they bargained for. At the end of their six weeks' teaching, they were ready to stretch their muscles in constructing a badly needed recreation building at Rainbow Glacier Camp, a Presbyterian summer camp for Alaskan young people. But the camp was in need of more than a recreation center by the time the student-teachers arrived. Five days before, the mess hall had burned to the ground. In those five days, men from nearby communities had hustled about the ruins, clearing rubble and leveling off the ground. They had set foundation posts and brought in lumber for a new combination mess hall and recreation center (28′ x 72′) and even had cleared off some virgin forests to make room for hastily-planned, bigger building.

The fifteen young people—plus two more who joined the group—took over from there. For ten days they sloshed around in the rain digging ditches for new power lines and water mains, hammering, sawing, lugging and climbing. They fitted floor joists, laid the plywood floor and raised the walls. Lifting the 72-foot side wall frames was a tricky business, but with 17 pairs of arms they did it. It was hard work but it was fun. The dripping young people enjoyed every minute of it, in spite of the continual rain and aching muscles. Their joy was vocal and they became known to their four leaders as "The Singing Seventeen." By the time they were ready to leave—after only ten days—the building was framed, sheathed, and ready for the roof.

Five other young people who had been serving in the Anchorage area came in as "The Singing Seventeen" were leaving. They worked for a few days cutting and assembling the 55 roof trusses, even putting some up.

Eight students from the Westminster Foundation of Miami University and Western College, Oxford, Ohio, undertook to paint the seven buildings at Haines House, a refuge for underprivileged Alaskan children. But it wasn't a matter of mere painting. Before they could swing a brush, they had to scrape off old paint and press sixty pounds of putty around the windows of the two dormitories. The work campers also helped in the local Presbyterian church by teaching in Sunday School, singing in the choir, and one fellow did his first stint of preaching. In the midst of all this, these young men and women had enough energy left to help the Haines House children build a float for a parade celebrating the entry of Alaska into the Union. Then, just for fun, they decided to construct their own float—of cardboard festooned with paint buckets and brushes. To their surprise, it won a bronze plaque.

When they got back home, they spread their enthusiasm around by speaking to church groups in Ohio. This same Westminster Foundation group has committed itself to two short-term camps this summer—one in Ohio and one in Pennsylvania—and they are looking for more work in a third one.

The United Presbyterian Center, Frenchburg, Kentucky, was formerly a mission school. It is now being converted into a home for the aged. This meant a lot of reconstruction. Nine young men and women from the University of Iowa came in to help remove old woodwork and plaster, build new partitions, plaster walls and ceilings and make themselves generally useful. The reconstruction will be continued this summer by Work Camp helpers.

Seventeen Westminster Foundation students from Iowa State College helped young people in a West Virginia mining community complete construction of their swimming pool and other outdoor recreational facilities. These projects were a part of the Scott's Run Presbyterian Church Mission Center.

No matter what part of the country they were in or how hard they

ADAH M. ARMSTRONG is in charge of summer work at the Board of National Missions of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

labored during the day, these Work Campers never failed to take part in an evening Devotional Hour. (Many of the camps also began their day with a brief Worship Service.) They considered this part of the program a *must*. Devotional Hour often stretched into long discussions of the Bible, religion, and life in general. The students had forgotten how tired they were and that they had to get up early again next morning.

Although applications for the 1960 Work Camp season have been practically all filed by now, there may still be accommodations for a few. Anyone interested may apply at the address given below.* The first Work Camp is already over. During the spring vacation (March 11-18) nine students from the Westminster Foundation of Colorado State University headed for Chamisal, New Mexico, to excavate a basement for the little Spanish church there. They also put in a floor, built walls and a ceiling. Now the Rev. Fortunato Castillo will have a suitable meeting room for the 75 children in Sunday School, Junior Fellowship, and Adventure Hour. Chamisal young people, all of Latin-American descent, worked with the Work Campers on this project and most of the students stayed at homes of congregation members. The project will be completed by another work Camp group during the summer.

Students from Coe College, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and young Indians from the Indian Reservation at Bdecan Lake, Tokio, North Dakota, will try a new experiment when they work together on giving a face-lifting to the Reservation and Community Church. Not only will they work together but will play, study, and live—camping, bedroll style—together during this project.

The Youth Office in Presbyterian Headquarters received an unusual application from a Catholic girl who is anxious to "work in a Protestant Work Camp this summer because I like to work with and help people, and would like a chance to teach people the truth of the Bible and help in any way possible."

This summer these joyful, enthusiastic young people will work in Boggs Academy, a Negro school in Georgia; Ganado Mission School for Navajo Indians in Arizona; Menaul School, a co-educational boarding high school for Spanish Americans, Albuquerque, New Mexico; various parts of Alaska; Embudo Hospital and Mora Valley Clinic, New Mexico; Mountaineer Mining Mission, West Virginia, and others.

Many of the Work Campers will be experiencing this new kind of life for the first time, but many will be going again from among those who went out last year. No matter which way it is they will have their horizons stretched and their lives enriched and come back to pass on their enthusiasm to others.

One coed applying for summer work a year ago said, "I do not know that I believe in Jesus Christ, but I am seeking. . . ." At the end of the summer she couldn't say enough in gratitude to her team mates and her leader for letting her "have a ringside seat on the Christians in action."

"They revealed a living and vital relationship to God who was real to them, and they were followers of Jesus Christ—these were true missionaries," was the way another student expressed it.

"I learned to grow up and to do my share," a young man said of his Alaskan Work Camp experience. "I don't know that anything could have meant more."

Many students found that by teaching others their own thinking jelled when they had to answer such questions from nine-to-twelve-year-olds, as "What is God? the Trinity? the Holy Spirit?" And many expressed amazement at the "extensive program of Christian evangelism of our church in southeastern Alaska."

One girl related an "especially rewarding" experience in Alaska. "When we first arrived, two youths (Indian) followed us home one night throwing sticks and stones at us. Six days later these same two boys were accompanying us home laden down with all our supplies which they had offered to carry."

"I learned that the core of Christian living is not preaching, talking, or words," another student said thoughtfully, "but doing through our actions and our witnessing for the Christ we love. My summer's experience with native groups has increased my love for people and my desire to spend my life helping them.

"It has revealed to me that at heart I am a teacher. My heart cries out to the Indian people of Alaska with their economic and social problems—only Christianity and the Christian life hold the answer. I long for the day when I can return and help them."

Said another student: "I have gained a better understanding of people in general and also a better understanding of myself. The people I came to serve taught me a form of psychology that no books or professors could ever teach."

Yet another: "The religious aspect of my life has grown tremendously. "Through fellowship and many hours of worship, prayer and guidance, I believe that I have found part of the answer to 'Who am I?' and 'Why am I here?' "

One of the boys who worked at Haines House last summer summed up the experience of most work campers when he said, "I learned that nine people in a group who have a purpose and are good-natured can spread more goodwill, have more fun, and do more toward proving the true concern of our faith by far than nine people can do as individuals.

"We found the Alaskans are much like state-siders—teenagers have the same problems; adults the same frustrations." He added, "My experiences helped to convince me that I want to be a minister."

"Be thoughtful, be silent, be reverent; for this is the House of God. Before the service speak to the Lord; during the service let the Lord speak to you; after the service speak to one another."

* Miss Adah Armstrong, Board of National Missions, The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. 475 Riverside Drive, New York 7, New York.

Courtesy of Ecumenical Work Camps

# Ecumenical Voluntary Service Projects

C. FREDERICK STOERKER

• We hear and read so much these days about the drift toward conformity. One danger in "doing what everyone else does" is that we often find ourselves simply "sitting on our hands"—doing nothing! I am convinced that this conformity is the moral equivalent of the lukewarmness mentioned in the vision of John: "So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth. For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing; not knowing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked."[1] And, rightly or wrongly, the church of today is accused of being lukewarm, of failing to give our own society and the society of the world the service which our strength should make possible—and which the New Testament strongly suggests is obligatory! It is important, then, to have a constructive answer when the question of service is raised.

Fourteen of us were gathered together recently at a study group made up of laymen and students. We were talking about Dietrich Bonhoffer's book, *The Cost of Discipleship,* when one person cracked the discussion wide open by saying: "I'm ready to do something. I think that to a limited degree, at least, I'm ready to pay the cost of discipleship. But what can I do? There is not one single thing of social significance where my voice or muscles will make a bit of difference." The storm of reaction I had expected did not develop. Someone said: "I think I agree, but could you tell us a bit more about what you mean"? The reply: "Well, what can we do, any of us? Sure, we can help our friends in little things, and console one another about our inability to touch the major problems of education and economics, of social development, of international relations and peace." Everyone seemed disposed to agree. Only one of the group challenged the conformity of inertia and the devaluation of individual worth.

As a guest, I sought to remain silent. But finally I asked if I might bring up a problem I had been confronted with that same day. Less than a mile and a half from the place where we were sitting, a showdown struggle was beginning over restrictive housing. Negroes were simply denied housing which they were in a position to buy. Several groups, an independent, socially-liberal group among them, had decided to poll the area to find out the extent of support for these restrictions. Meanwhile, a number of civic groups had already spoken out against the practice. But among them there had not been a single church. And yet, here were we, in that very same neighborhood, a serious Christian group unable to agree that there were any important services we could give. The conformity of inertia has as many facets as the most brilliant diamond. Each one helps to blind us to the facts we do not wish to see. The story given is a true one (and not from the South), and it is only one of many.

The greatest frontier for service for you is right where you are. It is waiting for your action. Perhaps it may take a bit of "poking around" to find it, or it may involve giving a great deal more effort to work you are already doing. Last summer for instance, an Ecumenical Work Camp was located at the Christian Center in Bloomington, Indiana, and the United Church Women of that city decided to sponsor a settlement house. In six weeks, a group of twelve young people and their leaders completely renovated one house and built two others from the foundations up to the point where they could be completed by the people of the community under the Center's leadership. Remarkable as this achievement is, it is not the reason for sharing this account with you. Even more important than the prac-

[1] Rev. 3:16, 17.

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tical results is the fact that each day women of Bloomington came out to the project. This was the result of a plan evolved by Dr. Jack Fellows, the director of the Center. By their own admission, a very large number of these women saw the opportunities for service on a scale far beyond their earlier vision, though organizationally they had supported the Center for a number of years. And the conformity of inertia to an established pattern was creatively broken through direct personal involvement.

Frequently service on the local frontier calls for the introduction of new patterns not only into our private lives but into our existing organizations as well. As churchmen, we are apt to be led increasingly outside the church itself, particularly when the church is conceived of as the building, its congregation and organizations. Illustrative of the variety of such situations are the tasks to which the Ecumenical Voluntary Service Projects in this country will address themselves this summer. There will be interracial, international and interconfessional groups undertaking specific projects for periods varying from one month to eleven weeks. They illustrate needs with which local groups and individuals might, and sometimes do, concern themselves. In St. Louis, one group will work for a month in a public housing area, cleaning apartments for the aged and ill, and giving such other service as they can to the people in the area. In the same city another group will be working in a state mental hospital. In Chicago, three congregations and a YMCA have joined in developing a plan to express together their Christian concern for people in an area so rapidly in transition that it can scarcely be said to have a stable population. In New York, service will be given to the young people in an area which, for all practical purposes, is 90 per cent unchurched. In Indianapolis, assistance will be given in a self-help housing construction project. Another project, in a rural setting, has unfortunately had to be canceled. But from personal experience, I can testify that the needs of rural America are no less diverse and real. Of all the local projects in which I have been involved, two of the most acute problems faced were in the open country.

The greatest single frontier in service is where you are—because it is here that everyone of us is called to respond. Yet this is certainly not the only frontier! I have mentioned the ecumenical projects that will be undertaken in our country this summer. There is no room in an article like this to list the denominational opportunities open to young persons—they would fill a book. But let us look at another frontier, for important as local service and nationally sponsored projects are, they are not enough—they do not tell the story of all the needs to which we should respond.

The story of these postwar years is an exciting account of our awakening to the fact that we are a part of one world—with its farthest corner less than twenty-four hours away by jet, and constantly present in our living room through radio and television. Over a million Americans will spend part of this summer in Europe; several hundred thousand will visit other parts of the world; and a record number of persons from other lands will visit our shores. From a chorus of Americans comes the cry "Tourism is not enough!" Conferences, educational travel tours, plus one million Americans working overseas form a part of the answer. Another is the church, with its international conferences, educational travel tours, missions and educators, its relief and self-help programs. Add to these a thousand young ecumenical camp workers, one fourth of them Americans. They are spread, each summer, across the face of the earth, dispersed so thinly as to be hardly noticeable, but helping to form a picture of an intriguing idea and its significant results.

At the heart of the Ecumenical Voluntary Service program of the Youth Department of the World Council of Churches is the word SERVICE. But paralleling it in importance is the ecumenical fellowship of these young Christians giving this service. Coming from various countries, diverse churches, but with a common faith, they serve as members of the church—wherever they are. This might be in a flood-devastated village in northern Japan, in refugee-packed Hong Kong, in a TB sanitorium on Okinawa, in Korea, the Philippines, India, or Indonesia. It could be in a multiracial center in South Africa, a new ecumenical center in Southern Rhodesia, an Algerian Arab camp, or where needed in any of the countries of western Europe. These services are symbols of Christian concern to us, but they have much more practical meaning to those who are served. Perhaps bricks have been laid, or children fed, or Christians from afar have joined in worship and the breaking of bread. Let's not be romantic about the quantity of work these young people can actually do. It could frequently be hired for much less than they pay to get themselves to any one of these spots. But is faith, is worship, is service ever measured on the ledger? Service is an act rather than an attitude. It is an act of love and concern, whose cost must be taken into account, but not as a measure of its worth. In many instances it may be given indirectly through contributing to the support of others. But it can never be understood except as it is our personal experience. It can be ours only as we free ourselves from the conformity of inertia.

To become involved in service is frequently frustrating. As warm and comfortable members of an affluent society, we feel we are in a position to serve. We serve, and discover we are part of a lonely, insecure and needy society. And we find that we begin to face more honestly the fact that we are lonely, insecure and needy. Young people involved in service frequently write, ". . . the faith came alive . . . ," "This was the church turned inside out . . . ," ". . . when an experience leaves as great an impact on me as this one, it is impossible to divorce myself from it." In service, the Christian finds an important answer to the threat of the conformity of inertia —he finds himself immersed in the message of the gospel.

# Worker-Witness in the National Parks

WARREN W. OST

• Since 1952, 640 seminary and college students have caught the excitement of service on the summer staffs of "A Christian Ministry in the National Parks." In the process, they enjoyed the spectacular beauty of the natural wonders in thirty-one of our national parks.

Although their experience in the wilderness is one of the prime attractions to this ministry, many of our student staff discover that the chief value of the Ministry for them was not the park itself. The major benefit for the student is the Ministry's impact on his understanding of the vocation of being a Christian. The Ministry has profound implications for his role as a future professional leader of the Church.

On July 1, 1960, A Christian Ministry in the National Parks will officially be eight years old. Actually, of course, the National Council of Churches, which sponsors the Ministry, was a late comer in the field. Religious activities and programs in some parks go back to the early 1900's. By 1952 nearly every one of the 31 areas included in the 1959 program had some history of a Christian ministry. This long background of local interest laid the foundation for the success of the national program.

The second major factor in its success has been the witness-worker concept at the core of the program. This has been the Ministry's peculiar genius. In the early stages of the experiment, we used the term "Priest-Worker" to describe this aspect of the operation. "Priest-Worker" seemed to communicate what we were attempting more readily than any new slogan we might invent. We discovered, however, that the term (derived from the French Priest-Worker Movement) carried many sacramental overtones which are not now inherent in our program. This may be less true as we develop more maturity and use more men who are ordained. Also, we noted a strong reaction to the phrase in some of the communions constituent to the National Council.

The terms "Witness-Worker," "Pastor-Worker," and "Minister-Worker" are used inter-changeably in this article. Perhaps they capture more accurately the real concept of the program. For me, even these phrases do not convey the real feeling of the program. There is a sense in which the sacramental character of physical work might make the term "Priest-Worker" legitimate if it were not now identified so closely with a particular sacramental concept of the Roman Catholic Church.

In the personal leadership of hundreds of National Park Service career employees and ministers and students sent into the parks by the churches, local initiative and Worker-Witnesses complement each other.

All of the student staff have regular secular jobs. They spend at least eight hours a day on these jobs. They work as garbage collectors, truck drivers, bus boys, bell hops, trail crew and maintenance men. The women work as waitresses, bus girls, cabin maids and salesgirls. The "secular" job is the first and most important aspect of the Ministry. Indeed, there is even real question that we should call manual labor "secular" as opposed to "sacred." Often a student's secular job is curiously the most sacred part of his ministry. Many seminary students shy away from our program for that reason. They want experience in a full-time ministry; somehow it is hard for them to conceive of a so-called secular job as a ministry with the fullest implications of Christian vocation.

The worker-witness aspect is not strange in the history of the American Church. Somewhere in the history of every one of our major Protestant denominations the worker-minister technique was tried and used. Particularly in the West, it was necessary for the frontier preacher to have a job to support himself and his family. It may be a question, perhaps, whether this dual role was more than an economic necessity. A professional full-time clergy emerged whenever there was enough money to pay for it.

Among some of the smaller pietistic groups, a persistent tradition of a lay clergy survives. In some instances, these laymen are well trained, either by experience or in schools. Even in these groups, as the clergy becomes better and better trained, there is the tendency for the clergy to get away from working with their hands to a more completely "spiritual role" of leadership. Some traditions, however, maintain that the essential character of ministry is both priest and worker. For example, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons) has continued this expression of the priesthood of all believers into its leadership, at all but the highest administrative levels.

In most Protestant churches in the U.S.A. this is not and probably should not be a workable plan. A Christian Ministry in the National Parks does not suggest that it should be. It does suggest, however, that certain aspects of the worker-witness plan are important for any Christian, particularly at the beginning of his training. Its emphasis on these aspects stresses for many future laymen the vital importance of a pastoral ministry for every Christian who will live his faith.

### *I. Economic Necessity or Essential Worth*

There is no doubt that economic necessity initially produced the worker-witness part of the program. To be sure it was a useful technique for expanding the program rapidly without great cost. Many of the new programs would be impossible without it and many of the larger programs much less effective.

Very early, however, we realized that the Worker-Witness plan was much more than merely a useful

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technique. More and more we have come to regard it as the very center of our concept of the Ministry. Its essential worth is now unquestioned —so much so, in fact, that even if we were able financially to send each student out on a fully professional basis, we would not do so. The worker values to the witness are too great.

Largely because of this concept, the resident park community does not regard the Ministry as imposed by the churches from without, but rather as growing up within the park community. The local people in the parks call upon the churches to provide leadership and help them set standards for an effective interdenominational program.

Although each park has had some history of religious activity, some have succeeded and many more have failed. In my judgment, the major cause for failure was the lack of an indigenous ministry. Because the ministry was imposed by well-intentioned churches outside the park, local people did not feel that the ministry was their own, and when the outside interest flagged the ministry died. In my own case in Yellowstone, my leadership was possible, largely if not entirely, because of my identification with the people, not so much as a minister but as a bell-hop. It is impossible to judge just how much this identification has meant to the success of the total program. Personally, I feel sure that I could not have done my work as effectively without the background and the acceptance which came from the four summers at Old Faithful as a bell-hop.

### *II. Vocation and the Nature of the Church*

The witness-worker character of the National Parks Ministry emphasizes the "priesthood of all believers" in a peculiar way. Also this particular aspect of the Park Ministry opens the door to the widely differing doctrines of the Church. Because the Ministry is interdenominational, the High churchmen must work with Low churchmen on the same Staff. Thus the dialogue between the Church and the Ministry lifts up concretely the age-old controversy: Is the Church where Christ is? Or is Christ where the Church is? (Ubi Christus ibi Ecclesia; Ubi Ecclesia ibi Christus?)

This difference of denominational traditions is dramatized every summer as each of the 140 students on our staff begins to reflect on his role as a worker-witness in an interdenominational ministry. Early this summer, I visited a park where we had only two seminary students, one from a High church and the other from a Low. Because of a mimeographing problem, the men had agreed to use the same order of worship. But what had seemed simple in the beginning might have turned out to be a bitter conflict, if both men and their advisors had not seen here an opportunity to stop and think about their own understanding of the ministry, which stemmed from each one's particular doctrine.

The worker-witness concept reminded both that the traditional character of each ecclesiastical system somehow had to be judged by the Gospel and its insistence on the "priesthood of all believers."

### *III. The Special Status*

A student worker-minister in a national park finds that he has no special status as a minister, as is usually accorded the pastor of a local congregation in a small town. Officially, the program urges him not to seek this special privilege and asks the park company for whom he works not to give it to him. If he achieves a measure of status or respect, he does this, not by seeking it (in a National Park this is the surest way not to get it) but rather by the relationship or rapport that emerges from his day to day contact with his fellow workers and with the management.

At each of the five regional training conferences for our staff, students are told that their status may be a little lower than the garbage collector. In a park resort community our student ministers may have one of the non-status jobs in the back of the house. There is probably no society more stratified than that of the resort business. Here status and respect are most often equated with position. A student's effectiveness as a minister depends upon his emergence out of this caste system as a spiritual leader. This happens in spite of the fact that no special status or privilege is accorded him, if he fulfills the spiritual requirements of the job.

For a young man preparing for the ministry, this has particular value. He sees the vocation without some of its more attractive trappings and privileges. There are few of the protections of a normal congregation available in the loosely structured park community. The status he has achieved by the end of his park summer is one which you may be sure he has earned.

### *IV. Constant Encounter*

Student ministers in National Parks learn that the pulpit is a terrifyingly conspicuous place for a Worker-Minister whose fellow laborers are the only stable part of his congregation. It has frightened several seminary students right out of the ministry.

The first time one of our staff decided to leave the ministry after his summer with us it depressed me. Later, I confessed the failure of our program for contributing to his decision, but the president of his seminary, quite to my surprise, complimented our program for its realistic approach, which convinced the student he didn't belong. The seminary had tried to do so, without result.

Once a student minister-worker preached a sermon to many of his fellow employees about "going the second mile." Just as he reached the climax to drive home a point he saw his fellow dishwasher seated before him. Remembering the time a week before when he wouldn't work 20 minutes overtime so that his buddy could have a date with a girl, the preacher lost his punch. The constant encounter in the dishpan had brought the pulpit uncomfortably close to the pew.

In A Christian Ministry in the National Parks, there is no separation between a public appearance and a private life. The Worker-Witness brings them together; the secu-

lar and the sacred are one—merely different aspects of the same Christian Vocation.

This is the part of the ministry upon which students reflect, long after the glamor of the park has disappeared. Many students have told me how much this one park experience meant to them.

"My ministry will never be the same after a summer in a national park," says Bill Hollister, once student body president at Union Seminary in New York and now a Presbyterian pastor in Burlington, Vt. "In my last year at the seminary, it helped me decide what kind of ministry I wanted. It will stay with me the rest of my life."

### *V. Employee-Management Relations*

One of the hardest parts of a student-minister's job is to accept the responsibility of being the pastor to his boss. In many instances the boss doesn't expect or want it. Even in cases where it is offered, the student minister finds it hard to discover just what this means.

The task is easier in situations where the management is favorable to the Ministry. It is especially helpful where there are good management-employee relationships. In most parks where the ministry flourishes the student minister has identified himself with management and labor.

In a few isolated areas, the company for a variety of reasons, has permitted the ministry but has taken no deep personal interest. Sometimes this has been because we have failed to provide good leadership; in these cases, it has taken several years to outgrow or overcome the handicap. In these parks, it is difficult, sometimes impossible, for a student minister to fulfill his role as pastor to either management or labor.

Usually employee group hostility emerges from a negative reaction to a student minister and to the Ministry team of the preceding year. In such cases, it often takes many years to overcome the tension. A notable exception was the student minister who completely won over a group of hostile employees in one year. He lived his faith without the piousness sometimes betrayed by professionally religious people.

The biggest problems arise where there is deep tension between resort management and labor. In these cases it is especially difficult, even for the most astute seminary student, to maintain sufficient objectivity to minister to both groups. Naturally, he will identify himself as one of the laborers. Unless he is very careful, he may find himself so involved in the tension that any effective communication with management is cut off for him. If the situation really gets bad, he can be fired. In two or three cases this has happened. I seriously question whether the student ministers would have acted as they did, had they maintained an objective pastoral role to both management and labor. It is also open to question whether the issues for which they fought were the important ones.

In some cases a student minister may be consulted in labor-management problems. In others he will not be. In cases where he feels real injustice is done, what should he do, especially if he is not consulted? A student's denominational background and his own personal inclination will often suggest patterns of action. (In an interdenominational setting many different suggestions will be made, you can be sure.) In most instances he must work out this part of his salvation and perhaps that of a large part of his own congregation with fear and trembling. He must rely on the guidance of God, patience, and common sense in an area so complicated that no clear pattern of right or wrong action may emerge.

After I became a student minister in Yellowstone and before the national program began, the director of an Industrial Chaplaincy program for seminary students in Chicago happened on our program in Yellowstone. Having no previous contact with our program, he pointed out this very important contribution of the Ministry. In national parks, seminary students are not there to observe and discuss labor-management problems, they are an inescapable part of them. He observed that the National Park Ministry was one of the best places he knew for seminary students to see uncovered the problems which the Church must understand and to which the Church must relate the gospel of reconciliation.

### *VI. The Sacramental Aspect of Physical Work*

One final aspect of the worker-witness movement in our program is the sacramental character of physical work. Because all of our staff work as well as minister, they unify in one vocation the alternation of worship and work. Speaking of this as a sacramental movement suggests a mystical and spiritual communication of Christ in material or visible form. Sacramental living is a popular concept in Roman Catholic circles, stemming from the Doctrine of Transubstantiation in the Lord's Supper. There is, however, in the current revival of Reformation thought, something of sacramental living in Luther's concept of a man being a "Christ" to his brother.

I venture to suggest that the Park Ministry's worker-witness plan may be its most important long-range contribution to the whole Church. Americans are on the move. A shorter working week is in the offing. With more and more hours of leisure and more and more mobility, millions will visit national parks and other resort areas. The Church must help people find religious, and specifically Christian, experience wherever they go, otherwise the Christian faith will become only a fragmentary rather than a dominant factor in life. If national parks and resorts are to play a greater role in American life, it may be that the witness-worker aspect of the Ministry will be "Christ" or speak in the name of Christ to the whole Church as she seeks a relevant ministry in this revolutionary new pattern of American life.

Writing this in the Doughton Park area of the Blue Ridge Parkway, North Carolina, has special significance for this sabbatical report. It is the first year for the ministry

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# Range Riders' Church

## BETWEEN BRANDING TIME AND ROUNDUP, THOUSANDS OF RANCH FAMILIES IN SIX STATES COME TOGETHER TO STRENGTHEN THEIR FAITH

VIC JAMESON

• Ranch people of the western United States live close to the land and hold a strong love for it. Their lives are not cluttered with the frills of city dwelling, and they like their living straight—forthright, simple, and basic.

They don't get to regular churches often because it's a long way to town from a hill-country ranch. So each year, when the branding is done and roundup time is yet a while off, the Church comes to them.

Such a place is Nogal Mesa, in south-central New Mexico. There, on a high plateau and surrounded by pine and pinon trees, the oldest of nearly a dozen such conferences had its annual meeting.

Though sponsored by the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., the meetings are interdenominational in practice. Ministers representing various churches preach at the four-times-daily services, their affiliations not announced. Persons who express a desire at the meetings to unite with a church are urged to join a congregation of their choice near their homes, and to become active workers in it.

Started in 1940, it has served as a founding point for three other ranchmen's meetings in New Mexico, two in Arizona, and others in Colorado, Wyoming, South Dakota and Nevada.

The first meeting grew out of the dreams and prayers of four men —the Reverend Ralph Hall, who now has spent about forty years working for the Presbyterian Board of National Missions as a missionary to the ranch people of the West; the Reverend Roger Sherman, for twenty-five years a Presbyterian Sunday school missionary; the Reverend Everett King, a former secretary of the Board of National Missions who is now pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Albuquerque; and Joe Evans, a retired rancher and cattle broker who, though a layman, is now spending most of his time in camp-meeting work.

"We spent three or four days looking for a location," Dr. Hall recalls. "We hadn't found one that quite suited us, when Forrest Sherman, Roger's brother, gave us a suggestion.

"He said there was place up near Nogal, where 'I just sort of have to take my hat off when I go by.'

"We went up to take a look at it, and all of us agreed that Nogal Mesa was the place we'd been looking for."

The first year, the four founders thought they'd be happy if as many as fifty or sixty persons attended the meeting. Instead, they had 125 at the first service on a Wednesday night and 400 or 500 by Sunday. Attendance has been growing ever since and reaches more than 1,000 now on the final day.

One year, rainy weather threatened to restrict both the opening activities and the attendance. A drizzle fell all day that Wednesday as preparations were made for the first preaching service, and clouds covered the sky.

Then, dramatically, at the moment Dr. Hall was voicing the opening prayer, the sun broke through and filled the temple with brilliant light.

As on a ranch, the day starts early at camp meetings. Breakfast is served beginning about 5:45, with bacon, eggs, hot cakes, and steaming strong coffee on the menu. The first preaching service is at 9 A.M., with another at 10:45. The ministers usually alternate in the services.

Noon and evening meals, like breakfast, follow the old ranch tradition in both quality and quantity. Nine beef cattle were donated by ranchers for the Nogal Mesa meeting. With the abundance of beef, cooked by an expert crew of Spanish Americans, there are *frijoles* (pinto beans), mashed potatoes and gravy, salad, coffee, and dessert.

Tin plates and tin cups clatter as the increasingly large crowds file through the line in the cook shed. (The Nogal site includes a permanent tabernacle and a permanent open-sided cooking and eating shed, although other sites don't.) But crowds don't slow the operation. "We fed 1,000 people in thirty-six minutes once last year," Roger Sherman notes.

At 4:30 in the afternoon, men and women hold separate prayer meetings. The women meet in the tabernacle, which has large doors all long the sides that can be folded out and up in hot weather.

The men gather at the Prayer Tree, a spreading juniper in a quiet spot on the grounds. There, with ministers attending only as guests if at all, they discuss Scripture, relate religious experiences, or simply talk from their hearts about God.

"Well, I'm sure thankful that I got to come," one grizzled rancher relates. "I tell you there's nothing else I'd rather do than be here."

"We need the Lord just as bad as the sheep need their shepherd," says another. "The old devil is like one of these coyotes; he'll get us if we're not careful."

Reports another: "When I go home I feel like I've unloaded all my sins."

And a letter comes from an old cowman who has seen the light: "I've started crawling through the fence to get on the safe side. . . . I'm going to go all the way with the Lord and make him a good hand. . . ."

The day closes, after evening preaching services, with a fellowship hour around the campfire.

The visitors camp mostly in family groups, in accommodations ranging from the most simple to extremely up-to-date. While some use only cowboy bed-rolls, others occupy tents of varying sizes. Still others bring trailer houses, and on the grounds this year was a new station wagon complete with beds and curtains for privacy.

A matter of pride with the men who "ride herd" on the meetings, is that no collection is ever taken there. Sometime during the meeting usually on the last day, an announcement of the expenses is made and a hat is left near the Communion table. Often, checks have been found in the hat with the amount left blank and a note that they are to be filled in "for whatever you need."

The job of overseeing and making arrangements for the meetings is no small chore. The church-supplied material now includes two complete sets of camp equipment—cooking and eating utensils to feed 1,200 to 1,500 persons, chairs, electricity plants, tents, and other items. It makes a full load for one large truck and two smaller pickups.

Even so, sometimes the crew has to "tear down" on Sunday night, travel up to 1,000 miles, and get the equipment ready to go again on the following Wednesday.

A number of ranch families have never missed a meeting, and for many it has become as much a part of living as ranch life itself. Some persons who came as young boys or girls now are grown, married, and bringing their own children.

The informality of the West is evident everywhere. Like the ranchers, the preachers wear levis, wide-brimmed hats, and cowboy boots, and many of the women wear denim clothing.

"We wanted the ranch people to feel they were doing something for themselves. So from the very beginning a large part of the responsibility has been given to them," Dr. Hall points out. "They furnish the beef and wood and take care of the grounds. The Board of National Missions pays my salary and the preachers (we've had some of the outstanding preachers in America) are paid only their travel expenses. They donate their service."

Typical of the feelings of the ranch people for the meetings is one woman's statement that "it's just like a bunch of kinfolk coming together."

But perhaps the best description of all came from a woman who suggested to Dr. Hall:

"I imagine heaven will be a lot like this."

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## Vacation Time—A Challenge to the Church

(*Continued from Page 5*)

and leadership permit; or its sessions may be on Mondays, Wednesdays, or Fridays for several consecutive weeks to lessen time demands on leadership; or in rural communities, junior high classes or family vacation church schools may meet in the evenings when time is available. Two excellent resources in this field are *The Vacation Church School in Christian Education* by Elsie Miller Butts, Abingdon Press and *The How of Vacation Church School,* available from the National Council of Churches.

### *The Resident Camp*

Another rapidly growing movement in Christian education today is resident camping. This seems to have greatest values for the older juniors, boys and girls who have completed the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades, and older young people. A camp provides a twenty-four hour-a-day outdoor laboratory for Christian living. Last summer over a half-million children and young people of the Church spent some time in resident church camps. If your community is planning a church camp, or planning to send boys and girls to one, you will want the planning guide available from the National Council, *Planning the Church Camp for Juniors* by La Donna Bogardus and *Church Camping for Junior Highs,* published by Westminster Press. Several excellent program guides for resident camping have also been published cooperatively and are available from denominational publishers.

### *Day Camping*

One of the most significant recent developments in Christian education is the rise of day camping. A day camp is an organized daytime experience, carried on in a close-to-home setting that provides the program possibilities of a camping environment with the campers returning home at night. This program has the same basic purpose as other Christian education programs, that is, the total growth of boys and girls as Christians.

This is still a very new movement and only a small number of our children are involved. It is within the realm of possibility, however, that it can take on the proportions which vacation church schools have developed. These two should supplement each other, for each has a unique value to contribute. This type of camping is a natural for small town and rural areas. *The Church Day Camp* by La Donna Bogardus, published by the National Council, is an excellent guide.

### *Migrant Ministries*

Thousands of children who need the special ministry of the Church are found in the rural areas of our country. Many of these are already being reached through established programs of the interdenominational migrant ministry. Creative program development in this area calls for an understanding of the needs, desires, and cultural values of these migrant people. Insofar as possible, the children should be incorporated into the local programs of the church. The establishment of friendly relations between migrant and community children pays rich dividends, but additional programs of child care, supplemental schooling, creative projects and recreation may be needed for the migrants. The Migrant Ministry serves in thirty states. For the address of your state migrant committee or other information on migrants write your state council of churches or the National headquarters, The Migrant Ministry, National Council of Churches, 475 Riverside Drive, New York 27, New York.

*Other Programs*

In one article there is room only to mention the great variety of activities which have become a part of the summer program of the churches. Each has unique values and each grows as it answers the need of a community's children and families. Perhaps story hours, recreation groups, or creative activities programs will be needed to supplement your Christian education program. Several communities have reported that they concentrate in the summer on total family work for a service project which aids the church program in the foreign or domestic mission field. Many youths in work camps are helping in reconstruction of rural chapels or in migrant work. The need determines what shall be established in any community and only if this is true will we make the best use of the summer for Christian teaching and living.

*Resources*

The greatest resources of any community are found within the community. Every one regardless of size has qualified leaders, or those who can become qualified leaders. Space, which in small town and rural churches often seems to be a handicap, is certainly less so in the summer-time for the whole out-of-doors is near at hand. A series of booklets for leaders who wish to use the outdoor areas more advantageously for Christian education is available from the Publications Department of the National Council of Churches.

The regional and national offices of denominations, as well as local and state councils of churches, are always ready to give help to local groups. Planning for the use of the summer with children, leadership training, program materials and many other helps are provided by these groups. The Children's Department of the National Council of Churches also has lists of publications which will be sent to anyone on request.

It is high time that the church make the fullest possible use of summer for the purpose of reaching its children and youth. The time is short if we hope to guide and influence the children so that they may, as Christians, develop the spiritual values and morals which we believe are essential in coping with the modern world. Any summer program of the Church must become an integral part of the total program. Plan and build that this may be true for your community.

# Drive-In Vespers

## "Worship At Eventide"

A. ELLSWORTH YOUNG

• Most people talk of the beauty of the out-of-doors. Many people claim they can worship God best out-of-doors, but few do. The Waltham Presbyterian Church, near Utica, Illinois, is giving its people both a chance to appreciate the beauty of the open countryside and a chance to worship God together—without the necessity of "dressing for church" or even getting out of their cars.

"Drive-In Vespers" has become an early summer tradition at the Waltham Church. This program of "Worship at Eventide" is held in a beautiful meadow which is part of the church's property. The congregation remains in its cars, which are parked facing a speaker's platform, and hears the service over a public address system.

Since this arrangement makes it impossible for the members to participate in congregational singing, music is furnished by guest choirs from churches of the surrounding communities.

To take advantage of the sunset, the hour of worship is timed to close just as the sun sinks below the horizon having cast its beauty across the sky in breath-taking evening splendor during the service.

The speakers for these evening services are pastors of the neighboring churches, as well as religious leaders from colleges and seminaries. Often outstanding Christian laymen are invited to preach the evening sermon. The emphasis is placed upon worship, and not the speaker's talents. It is interesting to note that the attendance at these services does not ordinarily depend upon the prominence of the speaker but upon suitable weather conditions.

I conduct the worship as pastor of the Waltham Church, assisted by the choir.

The mechanics of running such a program of worship are not complicated. The Board of Deacons assumes the responsibility for such details as getting the chairs and the public-address system, directing the parking of cars, receiving the offering, and supplying the after-service refreshments for the guest choir and speaker. In case of rain the service is held in the sanctuary of the church. We have built a permanent platform for the services that holds a piano and sufficient chairs for the speaker and choir. As the people gather recorded music is played over the public-address system, which is rented for a nominal fee. The offerings take care of all costs.

At present these services are held during the month of June and the first half of July, making six Sunday evenings altogether. Attendance averages around two hundred persons for each service. Plans are now being completed for the 1960 series which will begin Sunday evening, June 5th. This series will be the tenth consecutive "Drive-In Vespers" conducted under the following statement of purpose: "It is our purpose to present a varied program of worship in keeping with the dignity, inspiration, and beauty of God's Creation. All are cordially invited to worship with us at eventide in the open country."

More than half of the worshippers are from outside the local church; they represent eight or ten denominations.

The Waltham Church is six miles north of Utica, Illinois. It is almost literally a church in the cornfield.

THE REV. A. ELLSWORTH YOUNG is the Pastor of the Waltham Presbyterian Church in Utica, Illinois.

# The Chapel in the Woods

JOHN C. HARPER

• St. Matthew's Church in Bedford is an old parish and also an unusual one. Located in northern Westchester County, between Greenwich, Connecticut, and Mount Kisco, New York, it is placed in some of the loveliest country in the East. Bedford is a community of old, stately homes and the general area has been relatively untouched by the population thrust from Manhattan and neighboring cities. Miles of paths and trails go through deep woods, and it is possible to walk or ride for many miles without seeing another person. In this lovely part of Westchester, a mile and a quarter north of Bedford Village, is found St. Matthew's Episcopal Church. Its history is that of this pre-Revolutionary community and its beauty reflects the beauty and charm of the unspoiled countryside.

The church itself stands on forty acres of land, ten of which comprise the churchyard of green lawns and hedges. Founded in 1694, the present church was built in 1809. John Jay, our first Chief Justice, was one of its builders. It is a charming, colonial-style building with old box pews, clear glass windows, and even a pulpit in the center. As one looks out the windows he sees the churchyard and gardens with the woods beyond. Little does one suspect that within the woods and only a short distance from this old church building is found a unique outdoor church, The Chapel in the Woods. It is there, nevertheless, nestled at the foot of tall, stately hemlocks beside Beaver Brook, whose rushing waters can be heard as one prays or meditates during a service when one visits this quiet sanctuary.

The Chapel in the Woods was built many years ago under the leadership of a former rector of St. Matthew's, the Reverend Arthur Ketchum. Rough logs then constituted the pews and a stone altar was backed up by the trunk of a tall pine tree onto which was affixed a white birch cross. Now the logs have been smoothed over, and while no more comfortable than before, they do, at least, provide more secure seating. One enters the chapel through a rood screen made out of logs by members of St. Matthew's Church who in 1958 restored the chapel. An altar rail surrounds the stone altar, and a figure of St. Francis stands on one side, a small pulpit on the other. There is even an organ for services now. People come from far and near for an early morning Service of Holy Communion or for Evening Prayer. There is a quiet beauty in these lovely woods and also a great strength. Although the chapel is hidden deep within the woods, the rushing brook and the incessant sounds of nature remind the worshipper of God's activity within His world.

Often there have been weddings in the Chapel in the Woods, the bride in her long white dress walking down the path from her car to the waiting groom. The children of the parish love to join a procession to the chapel from the church, following the crucifer and flag bearer, and singing "Fairest Lord Jesus." Once there was a baptism held in the chapel, and frequent Communion Services are held at 8 A.M. during the summer months. The present Rector often preaches at Vesper Service, and one can almost feel at these and other times the answer to the psalmist's question, "From whence cometh my help?" the reply, "My help cometh from the Lord who hath made heaven and earth."

Heaven and earth are both very real in the Chapel in the Woods.

THE REV. JOHN C. HARPER is the Rector of St. Matthew's Church, Bedford, New York.

## Worker-Witness . . .

(*Continued from Page* 12)

under our direction in this area. A particular incident occurring at noon today suggested the title of this section, "The Sacramental Aspect of Physical Work."

Just before lunch our student minister learned that the grandson of the cook, the one who makes the southern biscuits, had just been drowned. The manager asked the student minister to go down to see her because she had spoken of her confidence in him earlier in the week. Our minister went down and was asked to come again. It is unlikely that the opportunity would have arisen if our man had not been there as a worker-minister. His special working relationship with the cook gave him peculiar access to her spiritual needs. Even more important is the sacramental opportunity that lies ahead for him to be "Christ" to her in the thousand of little thoughtful actions and works of love that will be possible because they worked together. Is this sacramental encounter of physical work not "An outward sign of inward grace?" Is not this working relationship with its many outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual grace—a sacramental one?

Some who read these words may have the impression that the 250,000 tourists or visitors who will worship with us each summer are not really important. You, the visitor, are very important. Evidence of your importance is the great number of different services held in each park every Sunday to accommodate those who travel and yet want to worship. The Park Ministry concentrates on seasonal employees and resident employees who look to us as their primary contact with the Church. By doing this we try to surround you, the visitor, with an authentic community of Christians, concerned about their relationship with God and with each other.

Services of public worship in National Parks are not talent shows imported by the management to entertain the guests. We are a real community of Christians who invite you to worship with us as a part of your spiritual restoration as you visit these spectacular areas in our national parks.